



CITY OF TRURO.

REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health,

TOGETHER WITH THAT OF THE

Sanitary Inspector,

for the Year 1938.

TRURO:
J. A. CLEAVE, PYDAR STREET.

TRURO.

THE MAYOR, ALDERMEN, AND CITIZENS OF TRURO.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my annual report. It is once again my pleasure to be able to state that the health of the City has been good for the past twelve months.

There has been no epidemic of any notifiable disease, a few cases of Influenza occurred during the year, but these were of a very mild nature.

Truro City is built on the Fal River, the river being navigable at high tide to the City

With its recently expanded boundaries the population may be taken as 12,700 for statistical purposes.

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Area | 2,450 acres. |
| No. of inhabited houses | 3,550 |
| Rateable value | £77.150 |
| Product of Id. Rate (est) | £301 |

Total Deaths 148 (Males 80. Females 68).

Death rate per 1,000 Truro City 12.0
" " " England and Wales 11.6

Principal causes of Death.

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| (1) Pregnancy | 1 |
| (2) Heart Disease | 33 |
| (3) Senility | 27 |
| (4) Cancer | 15 |
| (5) Pulmonary Tuberculosis | 8 |

Cause of Death (1)

Placenia Praevia, Caesarean Section

Pulmonary Tuberculosis 8 Males, ages 47, 34, 34, 33, 33, 22, 39, 27. Two cases not previously notified.

Addisons Disease 1 Not notified.

There has been no refusal or wilful neglect by Doctors in Truro to notify cases of Tuberculosis.

It was not found necessary during 1938 to compulsorily remove any case of Tuberculosis.

Total Live Births for Truro 171. Males 89. Females 82.

Birth Rate for Truro 13.6
" " " England and Wales 15.1.

Infectious notifications for 1938.

Scarlet Fever 2. Diphtheria 2. Pneumonia 1. Puerpural Pyrexia 1. Erysipelas 1
Undulant Fever 1.

Non Pulmonary Tuberculosis 5.

General Disseminated Tuberculosis 1.

Pulmonary Tuberculosis 13. Males ages 24, 22, 31, 20, 16, 32, 35.

Females ages 50, 34, 32, 31, 24.

26 patients were removed to the City Isolation Hospital. Of these, 15 came from the Rural, 6 from other outside areas.

There were 2 cases of Cerebro Spinal Meningitis and 1 of Paratyphoid B amongst these cases.

There were 3 deaths of Infants under one year of age due to Premature Birth.

The Sanitary Inspector is the only whole-time officer employed, a grant towards his salary, and that of the M.O.H. being made by the Treasury.

There are four Nurses employed in the City Area.

1. One Maternity Nurse.
2. Three General Nurses who are occasionally employed for Maternity work when required.

A whole-time Pathologist works at the Royal Cornwall Infirmary.

There are two Motor Ambulances in the City, one at the Isolation Hospital, owned by the City Council, used solely for infectious work, the second is maintained and operated by the St. John's Ambulance Brigade.

Free Bacteriological examinations in cases of Diphtheria and free Serum in cases of Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever are provided for those unable to pay.

There is a well attended Maternity and Infant Welfare Centre, the M.O.H. is also the M.O. in charge of the centre.

There is also an Orthopædic Centre in Truro.

Specialist Orthopædic, X-ray, Nose and Throat, and Pathological services are provided in Truro, at the Royal Cornwall Infirmary.

Truro Dispensary provides free medical treatment for patients unable to pay, at the M.O.'s Surgery, and patients are also visited by the M.O. at their own homes when necessary.

In addition there are two Public Assistance doctors and a Public Assistance Hospital for those in receipt of Relief.

By a mutual friendly agreement between doctors, National Health Insurance patients unable to pay, receive the benefit of specialist services free.

Water.

This is provided by the Truro Water Co. and important extensions to recently built outside areas have been made. In some cases private wells are used, but it is hoped that eventually practically all water will be supplied by the Company.

The main ways of purification of water are by filtration under pressure through sand, chlorination by gas, and then de-chlorination. Tests are made twice daily.

Not less than 8 samples per annum are submitted for bacteriological examination, and one for chemical analysis, but it has been pointed out to the Water Co. by the M.O.H. that it is desirable to have a chemical analysis done quarterly.

The Truro Water Co. have completed their works of providing a supplementary water supply should the main source prove inadequate. It has not yet been found necessary to make use of this emergency supply.

Samples were taken from public and private wells, and in cases of those giving unsatisfactory reports, the necessary steps were and are being taken.

Drainage.

The original drainage scheme has been completed and it is hoped to extend the system to all areas, but this unfortunately will take a considerable time. In spite of the drainage scheme and sewage farm, in flood times some sewage still enters the river.

There are no private or public swimming pools or baths in Truro.

The City Council has purchased a cesspit and gully emptier which is available for the use of owners and occupiers at a nominal charge.

Closet accommodation.

Except for isolated houses in the added area, such as Highertown and Malpas, practically the whole of the W.C. accommodation in the City is on the water carriage system.

Shops.

No special action was taken during the year, but I am of opinion that action may be necessary to see that shops are kept at a reasonable temperature during cold weather. It has been found that in many cases shop doors are kept open, whilst there is little or no heating apparatus in the shop.

Eradication of Bugs.

This was carried out in two or three houses.

Disinfested by means of spraying with proprietary liquids and by "Cimex" blocks. The furniture of tenants removing to Council houses is not compulsorily disinfested. Free disinfection is undertaken at the request of householders. It is not considered that bug infestation is serious in the City.

Schools.

The majority of the W.Cs. at the Schools are of the trough type, and are flushed at intervals during the day by automatic flushing cisterns.

All Schools are supplied with an adequate supply of water.

A scheme is in existence whereby children at schools requiring medical attention for ear, nose or throat trouble are dealt with at the Royal Cornwall Infirmary.

The parents of all children admitted to the City Isolation Hospital showing unhealthy conditions of the nose and throat are advised of their condition and are urged to obtain treatment for them after leaving the Hospital, or, in cases of Diphtheria carriers who show unhealthy tonsils, to have the tonsils removed at the Isolation Hospital.

Meat and Slaughter Houses.

Carcases inspected and condemned.

Tubercle in Meat—prosecutions. See table attached.

| | Cattle excluding Cows. | Cows. | Calves | Sheep and Lambs | Pigs. |
|--|------------------------------|-----------|--------|-----------------------|-------|
| Number killed (if known) .. | | not known | | | |
| Number inspected (approx.)... | 550 | 75 | 50 | 700 | 175 |
| <i>All diseases except Tuberculosis</i> Whole carcases condemned | nil | nil | nil | nil | nil |
| Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned. | 10 | 5 | nil | nil | nil |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuber- culosis. | | | | | |
| <i>Tuberculosis only.</i> Whole carcases condemned | 1 | | nil | | |
| Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned. | 25 | 12 | nil | 1 | 30 |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis. | | | | | |

The general condition of the meat sold in the City continues to be of good quality and generally free from disease.

Milk.

Frequent samples were taken and submitted for analysis. On the whole the reports were satisfactory. In some cases, however, the bacterial count was rather high, and some samples showed B. Coli content in relatively small quantities of milk. In all cases the dairymen were communicated with, advised to take greater precautions regarding cleanliness, and further samples were taken. The latter usually gave better results, and it is thought the improvement in the milk supply can be best obtained by continuing this method of sampling and advice to dairymen.

Tuberculosis in Milk.

NIL.

It is interesting to compare the report of 1906 with that for 1938 in connection with Milk.

There were 34 deaths of Infants under one year of age in 1906, due, in about 30 cases to diarrhoea.

There have been no deaths from epidemic diarrhoea in Truro for very many years, and I have not even heard of a case for at least ten years. I attribute this to good work done at the Infant Welfare Centre, and to work being quietly done to educate the public regarding clean milk.

Rag and Flock Acts.

So far as is known, there are no Rag and Flock Manufactories in the City.

Overcrowding.

The gradual re-housing of families under the slum clearance scheme has resulted in the abatement of many cases of overcrowding. Special consideration has also been given to this matter when Council houses fall vacant, and by these means there has been a considerable reduction in the number of overcrowded families. No special building scheme has been undertaken for the relief of overcrowding, apart from Slum Clearance.

Isolation Hospital.

This Hospital is maintained, and has been maintained for a number of years by the Truro Urban and Rural Authorities. No assistance is given by any outside authority. The Hospital has been found adequate for treatment of all notifiable diseases arising in these areas for the last ten years, no case being refused admission. Furthermore, it has come to the assistance of outside authorities in such cases as Diphtheria, Cerebro-spinal Meningitis, Scarlet Fever, Paratyphoid, Operation on Mastoid, removal of Tonsils in persistent Diphtheria carriers. By the Ministry of Health scale, 14 patients can be accommodated, but there has never been any difficulty in accommodating 21 patients. I consider the air space standard laid down by the Ministry as too high, especially when it is remembered most of the patients admitted are children.

Royal Cornwall Infirmary.

This Hospital is being rebuilt, and greatly enlarged. The number of Orthopædic beds will be greatly increased.

Some years ago there was a meeting between representatives of the City Council and the Royal Cornwall Infirmary Committee. The necessity of some form of observation ward for possible infectious cases was urged by the former, and agreed to by the latter. It is conceivable that more cases will be sent to the Royal Cornwall Infirmary from outside areas for diagnosis, and owing to the possibility of some of these cases proving to be infectious, it would be a great advantage to have some form of isolation block at the Royal Cornwall Infirmary where possible infectious cases could be isolated and kept under observation until the true nature of the case is ascertained, and then dealt with in a suitable manner.

General progress during the last ten years.

The main sanitary improvement has been the carrying out of a sewage disposal scheme whereby the discharge of crude sewage into the river has been obviated.

The Slum Clearance Scheme has also resulted in a great improvement in the general housing conditions in the City,

House refuse collection has been carried out under better conditions by the provision of covered motor vehicles.

Improvements at the Isolation Hospital have been carried out.

A careful watch has been kept on the water, milk and meat supplies.

1. *Inspection of Dwelling houses during the Year 1938:—*

| | |
|---|-----|
| (1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ... | 65 |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ... | 130 |
| (2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 ... | 65 |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose... | 130 |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation | 65 |
| (4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ... | — |

2. *Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of formal Notices:—*

| | |
|---|----|
| Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers | 10 |
|---|----|

3. *Action under Statutory Powers during the Year:—*

(a)—Proceedings under sections 17, 18, and 23 of the Housing Act, 1930 :

| | |
|--|-----|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs | Nil |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:— | |
| (a) By owners | Nil |
| (b) By Local Authority in default of owners .. | — |

(b).—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :

| | |
|---|-----|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied | 12 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices : | |
| (a) By owners | Nil |
| (a) By Local Authority in default of owners ... | Nil |

(c).—Proceedings under sections 19 and 21 of the Housing Act, 1930 :

| | |
|--|---|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made | 1 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders | 1 |

(d).—Proceedings under section 20 of the Housing Act, 1930 :

| | |
|--|-----|
| (1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made | Nil |
| (2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit | Nil |

4. *Housing Act, 1935—Overcrowding:—*

| | |
|---|-----|
| (a). — (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year ... | 15 |
| (ii) Number of families dwelling therein | 15 |
| (iii) Number of persons dwelling therein | 65 |
| (b).—Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year | Nil |
| (c). — (i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year ... | 14 |
| (ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases | 56 |

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

J. G. M. MOLONY,

Medical Officer of Health.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S DEPARTMENT,
MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS,
TRURO.

THE MAYOR, ALDERMEN AND CITIZENS
OF THE CITY OF TRURO.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit my Annual Report for the year 1938.

Housing. The final stages of the Five Year Slum Clearance Scheme were put in hand during the year and Clearance Orders in respect of thirteen areas were made. A public enquiry was held by the Minister of Health to consider objections and subsequently all the orders were confirmed with the exception of that relating to Mill Place, in respect of which an undertaking was accepted that the premises should be used for purposes other than that of human habitation. The order made in respect of two Council houses at Charles Street could not be confirmed but the Minister agreed to the subsidy being payable provided the premises were demolished.

With the exception of a few individual houses to be dealt with by means of Demolition Orders the original Slum Clearance Scheme has now been completed. The majority of the displaced persons were re-housed at Trelander in the 238 new houses provided.

The needs of the families were carefully considered when offering re-housing accommodation, and little difficulty was experienced in bringing about the change from the old to the new conditions.

Where displaced families did not wish to move to Trelander it was in most cases arranged to provide satisfactory exchanges of houses with other families. In this way, several cases of overcrowding were abated, or families provided with much more suitable accommodation.

Overcrowding. The re-housing of families under the Slum Clearance Scheme resulted in the abatement of some of the worst cases of overcrowding, and the general position in this respect is much easier.

There is, however, still a long waiting list of applicants for Council houses.

Isolation Hospital and Infectious Diseases. The Hospital was used during the year for the reception of patients from outside areas, and the cost of treatment recovered from the respective authorities.

All cases of infectious disease within the City were promptly dealt with.

Meat and Food Inspection. The usual work of Meat and Food Inspection was performed during the year and many visits paid to slaughter houses at various times. No proceedings were taken in respect of diseased meat, but in one case a warning was issued that greater care should be exercised in examining the glands of pigs' heads.

The general quality of the meat slaughtered in the City continues to be high. Condemnations of diseased and unsound meat and food were as follows:—

- 2 Bovine carcasses and organs. Generalised T.B.
- 31 Tuberculous pigs' heads.
- 60 lbs. pork unsound.
- 24 tins ham, etc. unsound.
- 114 lbs. beef tuberculous.

Milk Supply. The dairies and cowsheds were inspected by a Sub-committee. Their report presented to the Council stated that it was found that on the whole the general structural conditions of the premises were reasonably satisfactory.

In a few cases improvement as to cleanliness was asked for.

The reports on samples of milk taken from retailers' vehicles in the street gave negative results for tuberculosis.

Water Supply. Regular reports from the Truro Water Co. were received and the bacterial purity of the public supply continued to be very high. A well supplying Council houses at Tregarra was found to be heavily polluted. The well was closed and a supply laid on to the houses. The water from two private wells at Malpas was analysed and in one case the analyst reported that the water was quite unfit for drinking purposes. This well was ultimately closed and a supply laid on to the premises from the Water Co's main.

At Tregolls Terrace a private well which was polluted was also closed and a public supply of water laid on to the premises.

Samples of water from a public pump at Daniell Street and at Tresawles Road were taken. In the former case a notice was affixed to the pump stating that it was not to be used for drinking, and the report on the water at Tresawles Road was satisfactory.

Cesspits. A great deal of work was accomplished during the year in cleaning cesspits with the machine hired from Falmouth, and later by the Council's cesspool and gully emptier.

Without such an apparatus I am of the opinion that a serious state of affairs would have resulted from the large number of cesspits now in the City area.

Shops Acts and Factories Acts. Inspections were made of a considerable number of Shops to ascertain how far these premises complied with recent legislation.

At three shops the necessary arrangements were made to provide better means of heating during cold weather.

Rats and Mice Destruction Act. Throughout the year advice and free baits were given to occupiers of rat infected premises. The usual steps were taken during Rat Week to call the attention of the public to the necessity of taking steps to destroy rats and mice, and special attention was given to the Council's refuse dump.

Gas Regulation Act. Tests were made on six occasions during each quarter of the gas supplied by the Truro Gas Co., and in no case was the prescribed quality of the gas found to be below standard.

Hackney Carriages. The Hackney Carriage Committee inspected all the licensed vehicles and there were no complaints as to the conduct of licencees.

Generally. The general sanitary condition of the City was satisfactory during the year. Few statutory notices to abate nuisance were found to be necessary, and all bona fide complaints were investigated and the necessary action taken.

I am, Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

W. H. ENNOR,

Cert. R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

